

BPO Company of the Year SPi Global shares its CSR experience

Residents of GK Village get more than a roof over their heads

IT SHOULD have ended when the colorful houses were finished. But SPi Global and Springer, who worked together to help build the St. Mary's Compound in Barangay Moonwalk in Parañaque through Gawad Kalinga, felt that they can and should do more.

SPi Global, the largest Filipino-owned BPO company, together with its long-time client Springer, one of the world's leading suppliers of scientific and specialist literature, joined forces in 2005 to build more than 50 Gawad Kalinga houses in the said community. They called it the SPi-Springer Sunshine Village. This worthy project commemorates SPi Global's 25th anniversary. "There was a strong bond created between the community residents and SPi Global's employee volunteers during the build-out. SPi Global wanted to maintain its relationship with the community even after the turn-over of the houses. Thus, we created programs that will allow us to keep in touch with the community," said Celeste Ilagan, SPi Global's Vice President for External Affairs and Corporate Communications.

Carmen Fernandez, a resident of the village, said SPi Global and Springer helped her family not only in building a house they can call their own, but also in sending her children to school.

One of her three children is an SPi Global scholar and is studying at the Philippine Normal University. "Malaking tulong ang naibigay ng SPi Global sa aming pamilya. Hindi sapat ang kinikita namin para maitaguyod ang aming pamilya at mapaaral ang mga anak namin. Pero dahil sa tulong na binibigay ng SPi Global sa pagpapaaral ng anak

ko, nababawasan ang aming mga gastusin," she said.

Indeed kindness continues to reign among residents of SPi-Springer Sunshine Village as SPi Global continues to provide for the village's educational needs.

The village was made possible through the help of Gawad Kalinga (GK). Gawad Kalinga, which means "to give care", has been at the forefront of helping eradicate poverty in the Philippines. With a vision of a slum-free and squatter-free nation, GK has been working to build an empowered community where the people are self-reliant, self-sufficient and self-governing, and where they have a culture of *bayanihan*, love and respect for others, love for God and country, servant leadership, excellence and integrity.

Maulik Parekh, SPi Global's CEO and President, said the partnership between SPi Global and Springer, together with GK, has brought an outpouring of generosity and kindness. "Opportunities like this will pave the way to a deeper and stronger relationship within the communities where we are present. This is part of our team's *malasakit* which extends to our external stakeholders," he said.

"SPi Global maintained its relationship with the community with the help of its employee volunteers, and we regularly conduct



Picture at left shows the kids proudly displaying their certificates after the graduation ceremony. With them are Springer's Global Director for Typesetting, Win Sutanto, standing, center; SPi Global's Production Manager for Springer Laura Matienzo, 2nd from left; Gawad Kalinga's Jessica Veronique Yu, 5th from left; and their teachers. The other picture shows a resident having her blood pressure checked during SPi Global's medical mission.



feeding programs, dental and medical missions, and computer classes," Ms. Ilagan added. "Other than the scholarships being offered by the company in its other locations, such as Laguna and Dumaguete, SPi Global also sponsors scholarship programs for the children of the community leaders with the goal of offering employment to its scholars."

Reigning values

After SPi Global decided to adopt the village in 2005, the company also built a multi-purpose center to house a nursery school, a computer laboratory, and a meeting place for the community leaders. There are approximately 200 people residing in the village.

SPi Global and Springer supported the Child and Youth Development Program of the village where basic subjects, like Math, Science, and Filipino are taught. SPi

Global likewise built a computer laboratory at the school and donated five computers.

More than 32 children marched during the graduation rites held recently at the Moonwalk High School. Parents and residents of St. Mary's Compound attended the program.

Win Sutanto, Springer's Global Director for Typesetting, who is sponsoring the education of the community's young learners, was moved by the needs of the community's children.

"I read about SPi Global's CSR program in one of its newsletters. I thought it would be best to go and see it myself. During my visit, I met a few families and saw a lot of children. I asked the parents about the children's education and learned that there is a need for funding. I saw this as an opportunity to extend help to them," Sutanto said.

Gawad Kalinga Child and Youth Development Coordinator Jessica Veronique Yu commended the partnership of SPi Global, Springer, and Gawad Kalinga. "I admire them for going the extra mile," she said. "SPi Global was there despite some issues regarding the school and the lack of partners. The company planned activities for these children, established a good relationship with the parents in the community, and groomed graduates for employment. SPi Global is always one step ahead of us, which shows its eagerness and passion for this program."

In the same way, the teachers and parents at the village feel the love, acceptance, and friendship that both SPi Global and Springer are showing them.

Ma. Jesusa Pelingon, whose son is a recipient of the Best in Attendance award, hopes that

the partnership between SPi Global and Springer will continue. "Mahirap maging single mother lalo na kung mga gastusin na ang pinag-uusapan. Dahil sa tulong nabinigay ng SPi Global at Springer sa pagpapaaral ng mga anak namin, nabawasan kahit paano ang mga dinadala naming paghihirap," she said.

25-year-old teacher Maricris Galope feels grateful that she is able to take part in transforming the lives of the children. "It's funny because I did not plan on doing something like this. After trying it out and doing it for some time, I feel the fulfillment. I want to pass this on to the children and be an inspiration to them," she said.

SPi Global, which recently won the BPO Company of the Year Award during the 2011 International ICT Awards, has won something else at the village: the hearts of the children and their parents.